



Sourdough English Muffins



Chaz

 [cvillette](https://cvillette.livejournal.com/)

<https://cvillette.livejournal.com/>

2008-03-25 13:17:00

MOOD: 😊 peaceful

MUSIC: Nick Cave - Red Right Hand

- 2 tsp yeast
- 1 1/2 cup fed sourdough starter
- 2/3 cup instant nonfat dry milk
- 5 tsp sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 cup lukewarm water (90F to 105F)
- 3 to 4 cups all-purpose, flour
- Cornmeal

Place your fed starter in a bowl (I let Elmer's offspring sit out overnight, to get nice and mature, before using him) and add the other ingredients. Knead together--the resultant dough will be slack and sticky and probably stick to the table no matter how much flour you put down.

The extra yeast is because the muffins need a boost while cooking, or they come out like little squishy dough lumps. Not very nice. You want BIG holes, right?

You're not trying to develop gluten, so the kneading is just to mix everything together and make it homogenous. So basically, just mush it together for three or four minutes.

Leave the dough on the table, wash out and dry your bowl, and put the dough back in it. Cover it with plastic wrap and walk away for one to two hours.

Come back, divide the dough, roll it out on a lightly floured surface until it is about a third to a half of an inch thick, and punch it out in three-inch rounds. I get about two dozen from one batch. I use the same drinking glass to punch them as I do for biscuits, by the way.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper dusted with cornmeal. Place the punched rounds on the sheets. Dust the tops with more corn meal, and cover the sheets and proto-muffins with plastic wrap. The rounds should lie at least 3/4" apart, so they don't stick to each other. The lingering dough scraps can be kneaded back together, rolled out, and additional rounds cut until all or almost all of the dough is used up.

Let the muffins rise about an hour, until they start to look puffy and have doubled in size.

Meanwhile, heat your griddle over medium low heat. You can lightly brush it with butter or leave it dry, as long as it's well-seasoned. If you don't have a griddle, you can use your big cast-iron frypan. Move as many muffins as will fit without crowding onto the griddle. You will have to hover over the first batch, checking underneath to see how they are cooking and where the hot spots are, because they can burn really fast.

When the bottom side is dark golden brown, turn them over and do the same on the other side.

They take between four and seven minutes on a side, depending on how hot the griddle is and how thick the muffins are.

Try not to eat all 24 muffins in one sitting.

This is harder than you might think.

Failure Modes:

Burned muffins: griddle too hot, or cooking time too long.

Raw muffins: I said *dark* golden brown!!!

Muffins burned on the outside, raw on the inside: griddle *way* too hot

Failure to rise: I told you they needed the extra yeast. I did. But did you trust me? Nooooo.

TAGS: [elmer](#), [recipes](#)



Three things!

1) Okay, O., She Wants Revenge = yes. It's like the Eighties rose up from the grave and came looking

Experimental Whole Wheat Green Chile Robot Bread #1

Yes, baking with your hands is more fun. And the results have a better texture, and taste better.

[locked] Dream Journal

All right, unconscious mind. We're coming to an accommodation. If the dreams are you cleaning

23 comments

 adarad

March 25 2008, 17:38:25 UTC COLLAPSE

YUM. I really think I should try and get my hands on a starter. I mean, if I can get a shoggoth of my own sent across borders...



 cvillette

March 25 2008, 19:15:52 UTC COLLAPSE

I had to be talked into it. But now I am having so much fun with my new little friend....

 adarad

March 25 2008, 19:20:45 UTC COLLAPSE

Say hello to your little friend!

... Sorry, couldn't help it.

Deleted comment



 cvillette

March 25 2008, 19:14:45 UTC COLLAPSE

You probably won't need the gluten, since really, you want him to make BIG BUBBLES FAST.


I would guess you could get away with 50% whole wheat. I haven't gotten brave enough to try yet--but maybe next batch.

 stephanos

May 11 2008, 03:48:29 UTC COLLAPSE

I actually got some really good results with one third rye flour, one third whole wheat flour, and one third unbleached flour --- I just doubled all the rising times. :]



 [colomon](#)

[March 25 2008, 18:57:42 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)


We've just this morning run out of bread from Homer's first batch, I'm going to fire up the starter for another batch as soon as I get up from the computer.



 [cvillette](#)

[March 25 2008, 19:15:21 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

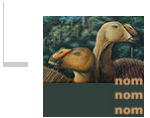
May both you and Homer thrive and grow strong in your symbiosis!

 [kit_croupier](#)

[March 25 2008, 23:33:26 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Yay! A new recipe. I have been toying with the idea of getting a shoggoth, though my husband will probably look at me funny.

I've been stalking... um, watching your LJ for a while so when I came across this recipe: [Crock Pot Chicken Lizzy](#). I thought of you, if only because it's described as 'nutritionally dense'. I haven't tried it myself but I inflict it upon you. (I AM making this [Sweet Cornbread](#) because I just can't resist. Going in the oven very soon.)



 [cvillette](#)

[March 26 2008, 02:40:13 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

It sounds delicious, anyway. Thank you.

(Your husband will probably forgive you the shoggoth if you share the results.)

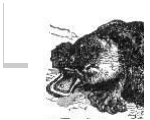


 [calanthe-b](#)

[March 26 2008, 03:32:27 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Move as many muffins as will fit without crowing onto the griddle

~blinks at strange mental image~ They make noises?



 [cvillette](#)

[March 26 2008, 03:39:01 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

They challenge each other when they impinge on each other's territories.

(What? You're a perfect typist?)



 [calanthe-b](#)


[March 26 2008, 03:42:31 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Challenging Muffins, now there's a concept...

No, I'm just in a strange mood post-teaching. Bear with me, I'll be sane again soon.

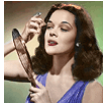
Deleted comment



 [cvillette](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:13:16 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Like bettas.



 [Ometotchtli](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:13:32 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

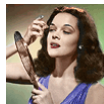
or betas.




 [cvillette](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:13:57 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

(shup)




 [Ometotchtli](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:14:25 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

(make me)

And where is my tithe of muffins, I ask?

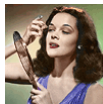


 [cvillette](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:14:45 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Um.

On your desk tomorrow morning?



 [Ometotchtli](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:15:11 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Ooo. Issa *smart* coyote.



 [calanthe-b](#)

[March 26 2008, 05:45:39 UTC](#) Edited: [March 26 2008, 05:46:09 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

~relocates comment so it makes sense~

Oh, I get it.

Like swamp dragons, only without the explosions.




 [sprrwhwk](#)

[March 26 2008, 12:33:52 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Now here's a random sourdough-related question: Could you make beer starting with yeast from a sourdough starter? (A cursory Google turns up a number of recipes for sourdough starter begun from beer, but nothing so far about making beer with wild yeast.)

Hunh. If you /can/ brew beer with sourdough starter, I bet you could also brew really awesome ginger beer with it. The flavor would be just about perfect.



 [cvillette](#)

[March 26 2008, 12:40:34 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I don't know. I know people have made beer and wine from bread yeast, and it comes out, well.

Nasty would be the polite term.

Wine is traditionally made with wild yeast, however--the yeast comes with the grapes, on the skin.

 [uffer](#)

[March 31 2008, 19:08:05 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Mead will also theoretically self-start because of wild yeasts involved with the honey, but it doesn't seem to do very well on the strength front. We always use the tame variety for just this reason. Plus, that way you know what you're getting and how it likes to live - incorrect care and feeding of the aquatic shoggoth can result in /very/ icky results, even when it doesn't try to climb out of the demijohn to explain the problem to you.

Not that I have ever had that happen and lost nearly half a gallon of proto-rose-wine in the process. No, no, no, never happens here...



[sourdough ginger beer](#)

 [st stan](#)

[August 8 2008, 19:02:41 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Back in the day, yeast = sourdough. That's all there was. It's even biblical: "a little yeast spreads through the whole batch of dough". That's how sourdough works. It feeds on carbohydrates, leaving CO2, water, acetic acid and ethanol in its path. You expose it to grains or anything else with sugar in it and it explodes in a feeding frenzy. That's why you see the slashes on sourdough bread, to keep the bread from exploding.

Beer making goes way back, as well. I'm sure we are talking about the same cooties.

My current sourdough culture has survived 30 years of abuse, including one full year it spent untouched in the refrigerator. The surviving culture is hearty, indeed.

I plan to try making beer with my sourdough. Besides the taste benefits, I am sure it will be much easier than the usual homebrew method, because the culture is not nearly as finicky as commercial yeast. The culture survives over a wide range of temperatures and it will kill any other cooties that might venture into the mix. At the end of its feast, the sourdough is the only thing living.

As for the ginger beer, the sourdough works very well. I started-off following the usual method, boiling, sterilizing, siphoning. What a mess. Now I grate fresh ginger into a Tupperware pitcher, zest and squeeze a lime, add some form of sugar and a little cream of tartar, fill the pitcher with water and set it in the sun until it gets nice and hot. Then I bring it inside and let it cool to lukewarm and pour the mixture through a strainer. I maintain a ginger beer starter that has about a tablespoon of sourdough and 3 cups of a sugar/water mixture. I pour about 1 cup of starter mixture into each of two two-liter soft drink bottles, then top off each bottle with the ginger mixture. I cap the bottles and keep them at room temperature until the sweetness is to my liking (nearly gone), which takes at least 36 hours. During this time I periodically shake the bottles to redistribute the settled yeast and unscrew (carefully) the caps to release pressure. Once the sweetness is to my liking, I put the bottles in the fridge.

An additional benefit of sourdough is that refrigeration does not stop the feeding frenzy, it just slows it down. So, you can pour a glass, put the bottle back in the fridge and the sourdough continues turning sweet into sour and repressurizing the bottle. The next glass is always better than the previous one.

I'm experimenting with various sugars. Regular table sugar was OK. I was surprised how well honey worked; might be the best so far. I used raw sugar on the current batch. It's showing promise. I'll put the bottles in the fridge tonight or tomorrow morning.

Three things!

1) Okay, O., She Wants Revenge =
yes. It's like the Eighties rose up
from the grave and came looking

Experimental Whole Wheat Green Chile Robot Bread #1

Yes, baking with your hands is
more fun. And the results have a
better texture, and taste better.

[locked] Dream Journal

All right, unconscious mind. We're
coming to an accommodation. If
the dreams are you cleaning